
	LOS LUNAS POLICE DEPARTMENT		
	OPERATIONS	NUMBER: OPR.06.01(A)	EFFECTIVE DATE: October 15, 2010
	SUBJECT: Sniper / Observer		REVIEW DATE: March 15, 2018
	AMENDS/ SUPERSEDES:	NMSA:	
NMMLEPSC STANDARDS: OPR.06.01(A)		APPROVED BY CHIEF OF POLICE NAITHAN G. GURULE  Signature	

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Sniper/Observer to provide tactical support to the police department. This includes the resolution of hostage barricaded situations, high-risk warrants, and specialized police/patrol.

II. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines governing the use and limitations of the Sniper/Observer

III. AS EMPLOYED IN THE POLICE TACTICAL TEAM APPLICATIONS, THE ROLE OF THE SNIPER / OBSERVER WILL PRIMARILY BE TWO FUNCTIONS:

- A. The Sniper / Observer will use his specialized training, positioning and sight enhancing equipment to observe and report real-time intelligence to his teammates and on-scene command personnel. Since Sniper / Observer plays such an integral role in intelligence gathering and team protection, he will be deployed as a part of all tactical operations including but not limited to; surveillance, pre-warrant service reconnaissance, intelligence gathering and reporting on scene.
- B. The Sniper / Observer will provide protective over watch to his team, other officers, civilians and/or hostages by bringing precision fire against designated human targets, with the intent to immediately terminate the dangerous actions of that designated target. In this action, the sniper's decision will be regulated by state statues relating to the use of deadly force by police officers, as well as applicable departmental policies.

IV. RULES OF ENGAGEMENT AS APPLIED TO THE SNIPER /

OBSERVER

The Sniper / Observer will be authorized to use deadly force against an individual in the following circumstances:

- A. To defend himself, another police officer, hostage, or other civilian personnel from the imminent threat of death or great bodily harm.
- B. As part of an organized assault by tactical team elements. In this event, the Sniper / Observer would use deadly force as the situation or assault plan dictates, against designated targets or targets of opportunity which present a threat of imminent death or great bodily harm as prioritized and engaged based on the danger they pose to other team members, hostages or civilian personnel.
- C. To prevent the escape from a tactical situation 's containment perimeter, if the sniper feels the subject would pose a greater danger of death or great bodily harm to the general public if allowed to continue his actions or succeed in his escape.
- D. Utilization of these Rules of Engagement is subject to meeting or exceeding the standards for use of deadly force as delineated by state statute and departmental policy.

V. TRAINING REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SNIPER / OBSERVER

- A. After selection to his position as Sniper / Observer, the candidate will attend and graduate from at least one formal sniper school.
- B. To meet the needs of his position, the Sniper / Observer must receive instruction and practice in the following skills and disciplines:

- 1. Field craft skills.

This is to include but not limited to, stalking, movement, camouflage, range estimation, hide site selection, construction and management.

- 2. Tactics.

This is to include, but not limited to, target selection, communications, site diagramming and operation planning.

- 3. Marksmanship.

Along with a regular, standardized qualification course, this will include practice in cold shot accuracy, multiple targets, moving targets, partially obscured targets, intermediate barriers, up and down hill shooting, various distances and shooting positions, low-light and no light shooting, and decision making.

- C. Training will be continued on a regular basis, not less than 4 hours a month. Approved training and training courses will also be continually sought.
- D. Sniper / Observer will attend formal sniper training every three years at a minimum to upgrade skills and knowledge with new tactics, techniques, and procedures.
- E. All training planned and done by the Sniper / Observer will be documented in writing. Records of that training will be maintained by Sniper team leader with copies sent to the SWAT team commander. Individual shooting records, in the form of data books, will be maintained by individual Sniper / Observers.

VI. SELECTION CRITERIA AND PROCESS FOR THE SNIPER/OBSERVER

- A. Sniper / Observer candidates will be selected from the roster of SWAT team members, based on the listed criteria:
 - 1. Current team member in good standing
 - 2. Volunteer for position
 - 3. Good physical condition
 - 4. Emotionally mature and stable
 - 5. Above satisfactory performance ratings
- B. After preliminary selection candidate will submit to the following screening steps:
 - 1. Standard pistol and rifle shooting qualification with a score not less than 90%
 - 2. Pistol and rifle stress shoot
 - 3. Oral interview conducted by team selection board
 - 4. Review of personnel file

5. Approval of sniper team members

- C. Selected candidate will join sniper team in a probationary status. Regular status will be achieved after the candidate has graduated from a formal police sniper school and has passed the department sniper qualification course.

VII. QUALIFICATION AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR THE SNIPER / OBSERVER

- A. To achieve and maintain operational status as a Sniper / Observer, each sniper team member will be required to meet the following standards:
1. Each Sniper / Observer will attend and graduate a formal sniper school.
 2. Each Sniper / Observer will pass the team qualification course. The course will be designed to test the Sniper / Observer's skills as they apply to realistic job-related applications. This may include cold bore shots, partially exposed targets, stress shots, moving targets, and intermediate barriers. This course will be administered at least ~~two~~ four (REVISED 03/18/2018) times a year. Each course will require a score of 90% or better to pass.
 3. Failure to pass a scheduled qualification course will result in another scheduled qualification course of fire on the next training day. Another failure to pass will result in removal from operational status until he completed a retraining by other Sniper / Observers and is able to demonstrate proficiency with two consecutive passing scores.
 4. Each Sniper / Observer will maintain a data book for each authorized precision rifle. The data book record the rifle, optic and rounds used during all range training.

VIII. AUTHORIZED EQUIPMENT SPECIFICATIONS

- A. Due to the possibility of engagement near hostages and tactical team members Sniper /Observers will utilize quality equipment to accomplish their duties.
1. Rifles may be provided by the police department or by the individual operator. Rifles must be capable of shooting a 1 MOA group at 100 yards with quality match grade ammunition. Acceptable calibers for general precision rifle use will be 223, 308. Other calibers, including but not limited to 30-06, .300 Win

Mag, .338 Lapua, will be authorized for specialized duty use i.e. Vehicle interdiction, barrier and armor penetration. Specialized duty rifles will be utilized as the tactical situation dictates. Rifles will also be equipped with a sling and a bipod. Rifles will also be equipped with quality scope rings and bases. All rifles will be authorized by the Sniper / Observer section leader and the department armorer.

2. Rifles must be equipped with a quality optic. Adjustable target turrets are mandatory. The scope must also be equipped with a mil scale reticule. Acceptable makes include but are not limited to Leupold, Night force, IOR. Rifle optics will be authorized by the Sniper / Observer section leader and the department armorer.
3. Ammunition will be match grade of quality make. Reloads will not be allowed. Acceptable match grade ammunition makes include but are not limited to Federal, Hornady, Black Hills. Specialized duty ammunition such as frangible, and AP (armor piercing) will be authorized and used as the tactical situation dictates. Ammunition will be authorized by the Sniper / Observer section leader and the department armorer.